(b) if so, what was stand and response of Vietnam Governnment thereto; and

(c) what other issues were discussed during the visit and the outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Vietnamese leaders reiterated support for India's candidature for Permanent Membership of UN Security Council.

(c) Among the bilateral issues discussed were trade and investment (especially in oil, gas and IT), Science & Technology, Tourism and cultural cooperation. Among International and regional issues, both sides reiterated support for the recently established Mekong-Ganga cooperation initiative whose next meeting will be hosted in Vietnam. India extended support for Vietnam's effort to join WTO.

Prime Minister's visit to Indonesia and Vietnam

179. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL:
SHRIMATI KUM KUM RAI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether as a part of New Delhi's new thrust on its "Look East" policy, the Prime Minister of India visited both Indonesia and Vietnam in January, 2001 and held discussions with their leaders;

(b) if so, what was the outcome of the Prime Minister's discussions with President, Abdurrahman Wahid of Indonesia and Prime Minister, Phan Van Khai of Vietnam; and

(c) whether any agreement were signed by India with these countries, if so, the details thereof, (country-wise)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) PM's visits served the following objective: to reiterate India's commitment to the Look East policy, to obtain first hand

understanding of their views on bilateral, regional and multilateral issues, to deepen ties to friendship for the leadership of the two countries and to reciprocate their visits to India a year ago. In Vietnam, PM's visit served to convey India's confidence in Vietnam as a factor for peace and stability in the region and in Indonesia, to reiterate India's support for Indonesia's unity and territorial integrity at a critical moment in its history. In Indonesia, both leaders condemend fundamentalism and terrorism.

(c) Yes, Sir. Details of the Agreements are given below:

With Indonesia (1) Agreement on Cooperative Activities in the field of Defence, (2) MOU on the establishment of the Joint Commission on economic, trade and technical cooperation, (3) MOU in the Fields of Science & Technology for the period 2001-2003, (4) Work Plan under MOU for Cooperation in the field of Agriculture, (5) Cultural Exchange Programme for the years 2001, 2002 and 2003.

With Vietnam: (1) Agreement on Tourism Cooperation, (2) Protocol extending the Cultural Exchange Programme for three years, i.e. 2001, 2002 and 2003, (3) MOU between the Department of Atomic Energy of India and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment of Vietnam for peaceful uses of Atomic Energy.

In addition, business-to-business agreements were also signed in Vietnam and Indonesia respectively.

Loss of lives and properties in Nepal during anti-India turmoil

180. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the factors responsible for recent anti-India flare up in Nepal;

(b) the extent of loss of lives and properties suffered during the turmoil;

(c) whether any meeting of the Indo-Nepal Joint Commission has been held to consider issues of mutual interests so as to prevent recurrence of such unpleasant incidents in future; and